

2014 CALENDAR | MAY

15 - 90 Degrees Los Angeles Evening
15-17 - 360LA National Conference

URBAN YOUTH WORKERS INSTITUTE
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URBAN YOUTH WORKERS INSTITUTE



UYWI's National Conference is back in Los Angeles! This premier urban youth worker's conference called 360LA will bring together urban youth leaders from all

parts of the U.S. for 3 days of specialized training, resourcing, networking and encouragement. **360 Los Angeles is scheduled for May 15 – 17, 2014 at**

TRAINING LEADERS, TRANSFORMING YOUTH

STAY CONNECTED:



Azusa Pacific University. The 2014 theme is "The City Needs a Father" - inspired by the fact that far too many youth are being raised fatherless and making destructive life altering decisions. They face many challenges and desperately need Jesus. We'll roll out dynamic sessions with America's leading urban experts in the youth ministry space such as Efrem Smith and Wilfredo De Jesus and offer over 60 cutting edge workshops along with some great artists.

We invite you to join us at our 360LA National Conference for a special partner appreciation lunch on May 17th at 12:30 pm. After lunch you can visit some of the training workshops and hear Efrem Smith at our 3:00 pm General Session. This is an exciting opportunity to experience UYWI's unique brand of urban youth worker training for yourself and meet some of the amazing leaders we develop, train and mentor with your support.

If you're available to attend please RSVP to Cynthia at cynthia@uywi.org or 800.734.8994 ext 215.

HELPING URBAN YOUTH LEADERS HEAL THROUGH THEIR FATHER WOUND

LARRY ACOSTA
Urban Youth Workers Institute



My heart continues to go out to youth who need the loving affirmation of a dad. I can't help but be moved to tears when I meet youth who have so much potential, yet are limited by the pain in their story due to a broken relationship with their dad. I see so much of my story in theirs and I just have to do something about it. That's why we chose "The City Needs a Father" as the theme for our 360 LA Conference on May 15-17. **Nationally 60% of all children growing up in the city are growing up in female heads of household with no father present. Statistically, a child in a single-parent household is far more likely to experience violence, continue a cycle of poverty, become drug dependent, commit a crime or perform below his peers in education. UYWI is committed to reaching and restoring urban kids growing up amidst the toxic influence of fatherlessness.** Thank you for helping us to be a voice of hope to this generation through the youth workers we train and mentor. Here's an excerpt from an article I recently wrote to our UYWI leaders on healing THROUGH their father wound:

1. Determine to break the chain of unhealthy patterns, habits and dysfunction from your past. Have a "WHATEVER IT TAKES" attitude and commitment, to break this generational sin cycle in your family tree. Embrace the pain in your story and allow it to fuel your resolve to be the first generation in your family to break away from those destructive patterns that have ripped your family off for far too long! Exodus 34:7 says, "*Yet He does not leave the guilty unpunished; He punishes the children and their children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.*" When I first read this, it read like a death sentence to me because of the brokenness in my family. However, I now understand this to depict what the results will be in my life and the lives of my kids and grandkids, unless I dare to invite Jesus to change me from the inside out and to break the chains of dysfunction, divorce, un-forgiveness, anger, critical spirit, alcoholism, etc., that exist in my family lineage. I am committed to doing whatever it takes to see these generational sins rooted out of our family tree! It may take a commitment to counseling each week so you can unpack the pain, heal through some of the hurt and move toward greater personal wholeness. I personally have benefitted greatly from a knowledgeable and Christ-centered counselor. It may mean a commitment to an accountability group or an AA or SA meeting weekly...WHATEVER IT TAKES! It may mean a commitment to reading, ongoing learning, seminars, marriage conferences and more.

2. Dare to learn "New Ways" and "New Words."

New ways such as, nurture, affirmation, playing together as a family, having dinner around the table together, reading with your kids, going to their games/school activities, showing real interest in them, taking family adventures together, daring to be the spiritual leader in your home, praying blessings over your children and spouse, even if you never saw this modeled! You can do this, WE CAN DO THIS by His grace! Dare to create the family environment you wished you would have had when you were growing up.

New words such as, "I love you", "I believe in you", "I'm proud of you", "I'm sorry, I was wrong", "Thank you", "Please help me" and more. Say the

words you long to hear and dare to say the words you wished you would have heard more of in your family when you were growing up. Let's model this for our children and when we mess up and default to the unhealthy patterns we grew up with, confess it to the Lord and apologize to your kids and move on! Keep growing... break the chain!

3. Discover the power of mentorship. Who is in your starting 5? Who are the people who have permission to speak into your life and to ask you the hard questions? I have a dear friend named John with whom I meet regularly over lunch or coffee. John is an older Christian man who speaks wisdom into my life and loves me like a friend and son. He asks me about my heart, life, family, ministry and more. He cares about me and shows me what my relationship with my dad might look like if my dad knew the Lord. Every time I meet with John, a part of my father wound heals, just a little bit more. In addition to an upward mentor like John, I have peer mentors in my life that I meet with as well as mentees that I pour into. In like manner, every time I meet with my peer mentors and choose to be vulnerable by pressing into community or I meet with the younger leaders in my life and build into them, a huge part of my heart heals and I experience the redemptive power of God to RE-WRITE the pain in my story and to break the generational sin cycles in my family tree.

Children and youth in our cities desperately need a father or a loving father-like role model who would dare to overcome their brokenness and compassionately love and lead those around them. The issue of fatherlessness is a global pandemic. Kids today are making disastrous decisions because of the pain in their lives due to their father wound. The urban youth workers that we serve are alive at this time in history to help BREAK THE CHAIN in their own lives and in the lives of youth growing up with distant or non-existent dads.

Thank you for your prayers and generous investment in serving leaders who are making a difference in the lives of at-risk youth who need urban leaders to point them to their perfect heavenly Dad.

